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# United States Department of Agriculture,

## BUREAU OF PLANT INDUSTRY,

Seed and Plant Introduction and Distribution,

WASHINGTON, D. C.

### DWARF MILO (*Andropogon sorghum* var.).

This is a specially selected dwarf variety of milo growing only 4 to 5 feet high. Milo is similar in an agricultural way to Kafir corn and durra. It is characterized by its ovate or oblong, rather compact, heads, made up of numerous roundish yellow grains. This crop will withstand greater drought than any other sorghum. It is especially adapted to the panhandle of Texas, western Oklahoma, western Kansas, eastern Colorado, and the higher portions of New Mexico and Arizona. It ordinarily yields from 30 to 40 bushels per acre. If 5 feet high, the yield of fodder is about 4 tons per acre.

**Planting.**—The seed should be planted about three or four weeks later than the season for Indian corn, medium early plantings usually giving the best results. It may be planted either flat or in a lister furrow. The latter method is preferred in sandy sections because it affords protection to the young plants during the windy spring. Milo is usually planted in rows 3 feet apart, so that the crop may be cultivated. At this distance it requires about 8 to 12 pounds of seed per acre. This will give a fairly thick and regular planting and a very uniform, even crop. If seeded less thickly, the plants become too coarse and uneven. If grown for hay, drill the rows 12 to 18 inches apart.

**Cultivation.**—Dwarf milo should be cultivated much the same as Indian corn. It may be given two or three harrowings while the plants are small, and as soon as sufficient growth is made the crop should be given a fairly deep and thorough cultivation. Two or three subsequent and shallower cultivations are desirable. If seeded in close drill rows, the crop should be harrowed early and cultivated later in the season with a weeder.

**Harvesting.**—For the best quality and yield of fodder and grain the crop should be cut in the late dough stage. If planted in 3-foot rows for fodder, the crop should be cut with a corn harvester and put in shocks of 30 to 40 bundles each. If the crop is planted solely for the grain yield, it should be allowed to stand in the field until the heads are thoroughly mature. It can then be cut and put in shocks, to be headed and stored later. If the crop is to be headed standing, it should be allowed to stand until the stem at the base of the head is dry, and no longer. This usually takes from two to four weeks after the grain is mature. In case the heads are cut by hand from the standing stalks the remaining part of the crop is best pastured in the field.

**Feeding.**—Dwarf milo is nearly equal to Indian corn in feeding value. In sections where it is grown it is fed in bundles or in the head to work horses, cattle, and hogs. Stock seem to prefer it to corn, and it has a very desirable laxative effect which keeps the animals in good condition. When fed along with a little cotton-seed meal it makes an excellent fattening feed.

**Suggestions.**—This selected strain of dwarf milo should be carefully compared as regards yield, uniformity, and quality with ordinary milo.

The rate of seeding exercises a marked influence on the evenness and yield of this crop, and careful tests should be made by every farmer to determine the best rate of seeding for his locality. It is suggested that different plantings be made, putting the seeds 3, 8, and 12 inches apart in the rows.

**Seed selection.**—Every farmer should select his own seed for planting. This should be done in the field and as soon as the first heads are mature. Only dwarf early plants that have no tendency to stool and have no side branches should be considered, and these should have fairly sweet and juicy stems. The stalk should bear 10 or 11 leaves and should have preferably an erect head well out of the boot. The head must not necessarily be large, but should be well shaped, rather oblong, and well filled at the butt and tip. Such selection will not only increase the yield, but will produce a crop that can more easily be harvested. Selections should always be made near the center of the field or at least 100 yards from any other variety of sorghum, as all the sorghums cross freely. Care should be taken also to remove other sorts of sorghum that may be in the patch where the selections are to be made. The results of the past two years' work have shown that selections thus made tend to come true to type. After two seasons of such selection the variety should be perfectly uniform.



